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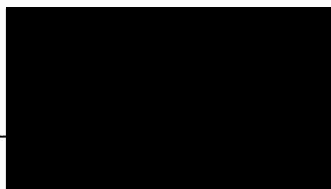
# A Study of the Importance of Life Skills Through Sports

By  
Charles Barr

A graduate project submitted to the Graduate School in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters of Science Degree in  
Sports and Athletics Administration

Lynn University  
November 25, 2001

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**APPROVED BY**

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to see if the Play With Purpose program will provide the 00-01 Lynn University women's basketball team with necessary tools to increase personal growth, and aide in developing a healthy self-esteem.

To research this subject matter a survey was conducted. The survey was administered to the 2000-2001 Lynn University's Women's Basketball team. Based on race, religion, and socio-economic background it was felt that the team represented a wide spectrum of collegiate athletes.

While researching past studies, reviewing related literature, and calculating the survey, it was found by this study that the group size, although diverse, was insufficient. Results also revealed short- term affects of the treatment to be less effective.

## **Chapter I**

By using athletics as a metaphor to gain practical application as well as apply strategic intent, we will utilize the immense popularity of sports. This vehicle will allow young athletes to experience and reflect on issues that the teenage years thrust upon them. Play with Purpose, is a unique company that provides the tools for young people to understand their values, purpose and perspective. By creating environments ranging from sports camps to interactive educational computer programs, young adults explore their current thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to their life choices. They also gain perspective and skills to build a strong inner self-awareness and commitment to their future. Play With Purpose, or PWP is the name of the program designed by Celia Slater, and Mary Ann Salarno. Play With Purpose was created to provide young women with tools for personal growth and develops healthy self-esteem.

### **Nature of the Problem**

It is believed that young women today are facing life and spiritual issues at a younger age than ever. It is imperative that they are given the opportunity to learn the skills, develop the perspective and create mentoring situations to deal with the questions, challenges and experiences life is calling them towards. There is an unwritten law in the world of college athletics that states that the Wins - Loses = the success of the season, and therefore many women feel a loss of self-esteem if they are not playing for a winning program.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to see if the PWP program will provide the 00-01 Lynn University women's basketball team with necessary tools to increase personal growth, and aide in developing a healthy self-esteem. It will also serve as a useful tool in critiquing the Play With Purpose program, and help to gain constructive criticism.

### Significance to the Institution

By implementing the PWP curriculum at this institution we may be giving our athletes an edge over their competition. Regardless of the outcome of the season, (win loss record) the athletes should take away with them an unforgettable team experience. A season where they not only learned to love and respect their teammates, but had the distinct opportunity to get to know themselves and for what they stand. They will naturally become invaluable additions to this university, and represent themselves, their program, and the university with highest regards.

Coach's face many challenges throughout the season, such as what offense are they going to implement and what defensive sets will they run. These are all sport specific questions that they are equipped to answer. They sometimes touch upon team building, and goal setting, but the depth at which they explore these issues could effect their successes, or lack thereof. These topics are often overlooked, and limit the teams potential. Actions are simply a translation of thoughts, so the key to great actions are great thoughts. In order to create great thoughts such as the "team first" concept, one must mentally train their team. The PWP program does just that. It allows athletes to

explore themselves, what they stand for, and if they are capable of committing to the team.

PWP is an invaluable tool for the coach of the future. It will give both the coach, and the player an edge, and make their potential for success unlimited. This study will benefit coaches of all sports, by determining the success of the PWP program.

#### Research Question

Will implementing the Play With Purpose Curriculum throughout the 00-01 season provide the Lynn University Women's Basketball Team with the necessary tools for personal growth, and the development of an increased self esteem?

## Chapter II

### Review of Related Literature

Why do we play sports? Some play for the competition, some for the physical activity. Some athletes become professionals, while after high school or college the vast majority's participation rate drops to once or twice a week. Are sports as shallow as they seem? What lessons are today's youth taking with them after their amateur sporting career is over? Organized sports can be a great way to teach life's lessons. Perhaps the turn athletics have recently taken has been for the worse. A win at all cost mentality has taken over, and today's youth are paying the price. Negative experiences are casting shadows over many of the positive lessons that athletic participation teaches.

At the collegiate level, there are similar situations where the gaps in the sport curriculum becomes obvious. The issue of life after sport becomes very important to these athletes. Job interviewing skills, and communication skills are just two examples of areas where collegiate athletes struggle. The athletic experience itself is irreplaceable, but who is teaching them the necessary life lessons. Are they getting it from their English 101 class? Is their American history professor discussing their value system, and helping them establish personal and professional goals?

The teaching of life skills is vital in the development of the complete student-athlete. Important life lessons should be addressed at every level of athletics, and should be made mandatory at all National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) institutions. Throughout this review we will examine what each level of sport is doing to further educate their participants in the field of life skills. We will begin with the youngest age



group, touch upon the high school scene, and learn about the collegiate plan of action that has already begun.

### *Why Sport?*

In a series of studies by Patricia A. Beitel Ed. D., across the last 10 years, several facts have been identified comparing boys and girls without competitive sport (athletic) experience. Their studies prove that females with athletic experience tend to have more desirable levels of specific social-psychological attributes than females with no competitive sport experience. "This series of studies (1985-1995), including a longitudinal evaluation, has also revealed the following findings in two or more different studies concerning learning new complex tasks, transfer to new complex tasks, and the learning /development of the ability to anticipate coincidence of two moving objects."(Beitel,1995).

There are parallel research results in the social-psychological area, indicating that women with athletic experience tend to have higher levels of self-confidence and self-esteem than women with no competitive sport experience.(Beitel, 1994). The self-confidence results suggest that females with athletic experience tend to believe in themselves significantly more than other females. Self-confidence is sometimes suggested to be the most important cognitive factor for success (Gill,1986). Women with high self-esteem will be less effected by situational and environmental changes, and usually will have less anxiety and stress resulting from, or related to, change (Gill,1988). The study goes on to prove that females with athletic experience scored higher than their non-athlete peers on three factors: (1) desire to strive for success, (2) focus on personal

performance standards, and (3) focus on interpersonal comparisons in performance (Gill, 1988). This should be reason enough why sport is so important to today's youth.

Dr. Patricia A. Beitel, associate professor in cultural studies at the University of Tennessee did her own study in 1994 and agrees. She states, "The women who participate in a competitive sport experience have the opportunity to develop skills and enhance abilities that will facilitate their progress through the demands of life. All of these psychological and social-psychological characteristics are suggested to be important for adults to strive for and perform at high levels in our culture and to manage the complexities of personal and professional life." (Beitel, 1995, 2).

The outcome of this study is just one reason why many people believe that sports are one of the most pervasive social forces that shape our society and influence the quality and character of American culture. The question still stands: Is sport alone providing our youth with a well enough rounded background?

Some say yes, while the vast majority are coming around to see that by using sport as a metaphor to teach life skills, there are many lessons to be learned. It is the responsibility of all those who influence sports, administrators, coaches, athletes and officials, to assure that athletic competition helps build the character and ethics of participants and spectators. The obvious starting point would be when the athletes are beginning their careers, and are highly impressionable. Here are what some organizations are doing to remedy this dilemma of one sided athletes.

#### *Youth Education through Sport*

YES, is the Youth Education through Sport program that is run by the NCAA. (National Collegiate Athletic Association). This organization presents clinics for 10-18

year old student athletes. During the clinic they participate in fun, free, and challenging sport-skills, life skills, and conditioning sessions conducted by collegiate coaches and student athletes. They take place throughout the year at the chosen NCAA championship sites.

### *Positive Coaching Alliance*

The Positive Coaching Alliance or PCA, is an organization formed out of Palo Alto California, through Stanford University. They have constructed an on-line workshop that is customized to each individual user, whether they are a coach, or parent. "We believe people want to change the culture of youth sports, but they are not equipped with the tools to do so," said Jim Thompson, founder and director of Positive Coaching Alliance.(Thompson, 2000, 24) "This is not a course that teaches coaches and parents the x's and o's of athletic skills, but rather a course that teaches the x's and o's of life skills. This course gives coaches, parents and administrators the tools to make youth sports a positive experience in the lives of children." (Thompson, 2000, 26) The PCA is aiming to combat the "win at all costs" mentality pervading youth sports culture, by developing leadership and management skills.

The workshop includes instruction on becoming a "Double-Goal coach". This is a coach who cares about both winning and helping players develop positive character traits.

The PCA's Mission is to transform youth sports so sports can transform youth.(Thompson)

### *High School Situations*

This trend of teaching life skills is being spread among the high school ranks as well. Even the talent camps are implementing life lessons into their schedule. Nike Blue

Chip Shoot Outs are the epitome of a talent meat market. Only the best of the best are invited to these elite tournaments. College coaches nationwide attend these games hoping to sign one of the best. What does Nike get out of it? The same thing Adidas gets, if the athlete chose to attend their camp. Their precious logo will be paraded around by top-notch athletes across the country, and they attempt to create a relationship with that athlete in case they do make the professional rankings. Recently the two big all-star camps, Nike Blue Chip, and Adidas ABCD have changed for the better. The day before the tournament players are required to attend life skills, and other classes before playing ball at night. The first two days of this year's All-American Basketball camp in Indianapolis featured 12 hours of classroom work, part of which was devoted to "life skills" (Graham, 2000). As grand as this may seem it is only dealing with the best of the best in their particular sport. What about the rest?

### *Uneducated Coaches*

Part of the problem lies within the coaching ranks. Coaches need to teach coaches how to be teachers. "We need our coaches to mentor the people coming up, to help show them the way, and to inspire them to become teachers. Some coaches are doing it already on their own, but we need a concentrated effort to get everyone involved." (Brownfield, 2000) According to Jack Hayes, executive director of the California Interscholastic Federation, of the estimated 75,000 high school coaches in the state, 25,000 leave their positions each year. Brownfield states that the majority of the turnover involves walk-on coaches, and men and women who are not credentialed teachers. The average coaching lifespan of a walk-on coach is a year and a half. The average for a coach who is also a teacher is 15 years. According to Robert Garret the "teacher coach

talent pool has dwindled over the years for a few reasons,” (Garret, 2000, 2) He feels that the number of coaching positions has increased to coincide with participation in girl’s sports. The need to fill boys and girls coaching positions at each level has led many administrators to hire personnel regardless of educational background. He also believes that financial compensation plays a role, stating that coaches do not get paid enough for the amount of work they perform. “If we can get 1,000 coaches to say ‘in my career, I will mentor three people in the profession’ that’s 3,000 we didn’t have before, Brownfield said. “It’s going to be a slow turnaround, but it’s a beginning.”(Brownfield, 2000)

### *Collegiate Actions*

The NCAA has been making a difference in students athlete’s lives by creating a program specifically designed to teach life skills. The name of this program is actually called CHAMPS/ life skills, with CHAMPS standing for Challenging Athletes Minds for Personal Success. It was created in 1991, by the NCAA in an effort to create a total development program for student athletes. The Outreach Mission is: To provide services and support to the membership, public, and media to develop and enhance the life of the student athlete through educational programs and resources focusing on gender equity, student-athlete welfare and life skills. This mission statement goes hand in hand with the NCAA’s. The mission of the NCAA is to maintain intercollegiate athletics as an integral part of the campus educational program and the athlete as an integral part of the student body. With this in mind, the CHAMPS/life skills program was created to support the student development initiatives of its member intuitions and to enhance the quality of the student-athlete experience within the university setting. One of the five focus areas in the

CHAMPS / life skills program is the commitment to personal development. They encourage emotional well-being, decision-making skills, and personal growth.

([www.ncaa.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills/instructional.html](http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs_lifeskills/instructional.html))

Universities throughout the United States require freshmen to attend freshman seminar classes. These classes usually cover topics that deal with adjusting to the change from high school to college. Communication skills, and goal setting are some other areas of interest that are covered in most classes. For example, at Kennesaw State University the freshman seminar class has been in place for 14 years, and focuses in on study and life skills. Being the natural fit that it was, they have adopted the CHAMPS/life skills ideas into their freshman seminar curriculum. They teach in an exploratory environment, complete with hands on experience. They feel that CHAMPS/life skills is an ongoing commitment and emphasizes the building nature of the program, urging us to do a little at a time and add things as able. ([www.ncaa.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills/instructional.html](http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs_lifeskills/instructional.html))

The University of Washington took their women's soccer team to a ropes course to encourage team growth. These and similar courses are excellent tools to create a bond in a team. Whether you are trying to build cohesiveness as a team, increase risk-taking for individuals, or develop leadership skills in your student athletes, challenge courses are a fun, creative and effective way to teach these skills. These courses help people face challenges, develop decision-making abilities, improve communication skills, and improve on team cohesion. They also build trust and increase group efficiency.

([www.ncall.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills/newsletters.html](http://www.ncall.org/edout/champs_lifeskills/newsletters.html))

There are various ways in which the CHAMPS/ life skills program educates. The term life skills spans a broad band of lessons that are not all taught in the classroom. For

example, at Michigan State University, the program sponsored a career night for their student athletes. Nearly 40 companies attended, meeting with over 200 student-athletes. The night was designed to allow individuals at all stages of career development to explore professional options, network with specific organizations and pursue internships and full time positions. The program also sponsored an interview session for five companies the following day.

([http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills.newsletter.html](http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs_lifeskills.newsletter.html))

Not all of the teaching is fun and games; Rhode Island College implemented a mandatory study hall for “athletes at risk.” These designated athletes were required to fulfill 6 hours per week of the 24 hours offered. Student-athletes who did not fulfill requirements are suspended from practice and competition. All athletes with a GPA under 2.0, or athletes below a 2.25 by the end of four semesters, also are required to attend. They stress that the only way such rules are being upheld, is from strong support from the coaching staff, parents, faculty/staff and campus administration.

([http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills/newsletter.html](http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs_lifeskills/newsletter.html))

Part of the University of Mississippi mission statement declares: “The Department will prepare student-athletes to be productive members of society by assisting in their development of academic, athletic, social, and leadership skills within an environment which fosters integrity, sportsmanship, and emotional, physical, and mental well being.”

(<http://olemisssports.fansonly.com/school-bio/ole-mission.html>) This university is upholding it’s mission, by holding seminars like the one on “Insight into the career process” where the student learned more about life after college, and more detailed aspects of interviewing for a post graduate position. Sections of the seminar included

advice on how traits about themselves as athletes can enhance the whole process of career pursuit, and how they can use athletics as a tool for differentiating themselves from other potential candidates.

The number of student-athletes that make it to the professional ranks is very small. The NCAA reported that on the average only 2% of intercollegiate students-athletes become professionals. What happens after college? The intense immersion in sport is not always conducive to career development. Ohio State University has developed a program entitled Positive Transitions. Positive Transitions focuses on real life skills while providing personal, academic and career assistance preparing the student-athlete for the transition process and planning alternatives to the pro sports dream. Identity, exploration, goal setting, decision-making, communication skills, and career exploration are topics that are covered in the course. The class concludes with students formulating a game plan for the future. Student-athletes are encouraged to take responsibility to develop and implement a career plan.

First hand testimony from Oklahoma State freshman Carey Hobbs strongly suggests that the programs work. "I think the most important concept that I have learned from this is to accept responsibility for my own actions."

([http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills/newsletter.html](http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs_lifeskills/newsletter.html)) A very important life lesson, that is more than often learned too late in life. He goes on to state, "as student-athletes it is our obligation to be positive role models and mentors. We never know how we will impact the children that look up to us. I have learned through the life skills



program that it is possible to make a difference, one child at a time.”

([http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs\\_lifeskills/newsletter.html](http://www.ncaa.org/edout/champs_lifeskills/newsletter.html))

### *The Next Level*

Professional sports have taken on somewhat of a negative image, which is created by highly publicized instances of misconduct by prominent athletes and coaches.

Professional sports have not done a good job publicizing the importance of their efforts to educate their athletes on life skills. It is not uncommon for an athlete to enter the draft before graduating from a college, and sometimes athletes enter directly from high school. In doing so they would miss all of the opportunities that programs such as CHAMPS presents. Then what? Who's responsibility are they now? It is up to the league to teach them the necessary skills to survive. How are young men and women, who grew up at poverty level, expected to act when they sign contracts for millions of dollars? Believe it or not, professional leagues have developed programs designed to help their stellar athletes through these changing times.

The National Football League, NFL holds a four-day program aimed at teaching life skills to new players. All 254 drafted players were required to attend. The Heisman Trophy winner Ron Dayne faces a \$10,000.00 fine from the NFL for missing this mandatory League-sponsored rookie conference. This is just an example of how serious they are about their players.

Laurie Soltman is a professional baseball coach. She does not specialize in pitching, or catching. She is not a third base coach, or a manager, but a life coach. “Specifically, life skills, an aspect long overlooked by the combine that sucks in hopeful young men and spits out relatively few major-leaguers.” says Soltman when asked about

her work. "As an organization and as an industry, we feel we have a responsibility to help them develop off the field as well as on the field," she said. "Our philosophy is that we sign young men and they develop into young adults in our care." (Soltman, 2000, 3D)

### *Outside of Sports*

Life skills are just as important to sports teams, as they are to potential employers. A degree sometimes is not enough. General life skills are equally important to a recruiter. A different way that athletes may gain these skills is through volunteer work, paid employment at weekends or holidays, and through special training courses.(All of which are being taught through the CHAMPS / life skills course)

Another way in which life skills are being taught is through camping experiences. Camp professionals know that camp provides the opportunity to teach life-long skills, such as creative thinking, decision making, and getting along with others. By developing goals for your program and anticipated outcomes for your campers, you can ensure that your camp program will do kids a world of good.

## Chapter III

### Methodology

#### *Definitions:*

**Play With Purpose** - a unique company that provides the tools for young people to understand their values, purpose and perspective.

**The 00-01 season** - began in June of 00 and will end in May 01.

**Personal Growth** - defined as developing a sense of personal power to trust themselves through the inevitable changes life brings.

**Healthy Self-Esteem** - developing a sense of understanding about the benefits of combining body, mind and spirit principles to achieve maximum results.

#### Procedures

Much of the research done will be primary data collected by the researcher. It will be compared to some secondary data, but due to the newness of the material, comparisons to previous experiments will be limited. Qualitative data assessments will be collected through face to face interviews specifically designed to develop a better understanding of what they think of the research topic. Quantitative data will be collected as well, through surveys taken by the student-athletes. The researcher will be observing the entire season firsthand as an assistant coach.

### Description of Population

Lynn University is a four-year institution which sponsors 15 athletic teams. 70 different countries are represented in the student population. Lynn is a liberal arts University that has extremely strong schools of communications, and education.

### Sample

Our sample group consists of a wide variety of backgrounds. Lynn University's Women's Basketball team has 10 representatives from various religions, races, states, and even countries. Their ages vary throughout the described population's spectrum. Their socio-economic background provides this group with various upbringings, thus making our range of backgrounds even more broad.

### Instrument

The instrument used to conduct the research will be a survey composed by the researcher.

### Experimental Group Treatment

The treatment that the experimental group will undergo is the Play With Purpose program precisely described above. It will last for the duration of the season, and will be strategically implemented throughout.

### Data Presentation

The data that is to be collected will be presented not only in writing, but in graphs as well. Charts will also be constructed to illustrate the outcome of the collected data.

### Assumptions

For the purpose of this study we will assume that no one on the team has ever experienced an entire season of an off the court program such as PWP.

We will assume that the athletes do not completely understand themselves. We will take for granted that they have not explored their own value system. The assumption will be made that they have various belief structures, some in questionable strength. There is a good chance that they are all playing the game of basketball for various reasons, and that they do not share the same goals. We will assume that they are not 100% committed to the team at the beginning of the year, based on the level of condition to which they returned to school.

### Limitations

This study will be limited to the 2000-01 Basketball season. Treatment will be limited to the Lynn University's Women's Basketball team, which consists of nine participating athletes, and one red shirted athlete.

### Expectations

It is anticipated that the PWP program will have a significant impact on the 00-01 team's overall team experience, and life in general. The individual athlete will gain insight toward who they really are, what they stand for, and in what they believe. They will begin to understand who they are now, and who they want to become. They will learn the skills to set goals based on their own values and beliefs. They will also learn what commitment means, how to make agreements with themselves, their team, and how to keep them. This program is anticipated to make a huge impact in the world of

Women's athletics. A revolutionary program that will change the way the game is played, and taught.

#### Importance of Anticipated Benefits to Institution

This program will benefit Lynn University in many ways. By implementing this program we are training student-athletes to become well-rounded young women. Student-athletes who represent the school will have the ability to establish, and attain personal goals. They will have given back to the surrounding community through service programs, thus promoting the schools name in a positive manner.

#### Improvement of the Educational Process

This program (treatment) will take the educational process to the next level. By using sport as a metaphor, the *Play With Purpose* program translates lessons on the court, into life lessons. There are certain lessons student-athletes need to learn that the traditional schooling does not teach. Perhaps we will learn that the educational process can be nothing but improved by this program.

## Chapter IV

### Results

The surveys were conducted with the help of 10 student-athletes from the Lynn University women's basketball team. There were nine participating athletes, and one red shirt athlete (did not play the entire season, but participated in the PWP experience). Our sample group consists of a wide variety of backgrounds. Lynn University's Women's Basketball team has 10 representatives from various religions, races, states, and even countries. Their age varies throughout the described population's spectrum. Their financial history provides this group with various upbringings, thus making our range of backgrounds even more broad and varried. The survey's used a rating scale from one through ten on various questions. One being the lowest, five being average, and ten the best possible rating. Out of all the returned surveys there was not a rating lower than five, which was selected once (exhibit C), and a six was chosen only twice (exhibit D). This statistic indicates that each category surveyed received an above average response. The surveys were anonymous, warranting an honest response and collected all together in an envelope to further secure ones privacy.

The overall experience was queried in the survey in order to gain insight as to the general feeling for the program. After ranking the program from one to ten, there was space provided to say why they answered the way they did. 40% of the student-athletes ranked the overall experience a 10, while 30% chose nine (exhibit B). The general consensus was that they learned not only about themselves, but about their teammates as

well. They gained insight as to who they were, what they stood for, and better ways to communicate with each other.

The next question we surveyed was, “did this program help you to be your best?” A predictable 40% chose to rank in at 8, which appears to be an above average ranking. Overall there was not a lower ranking than 5, so that would put 8 in an above average spot. 20% chose a 7, and 20 % chose a 9. Several left the space provided blank, not elaborating on their choice. One of the athletes who chose an 8 went on to say how she has learned to talk to herself in a less deprecating way. Through some of the exercises that she participated in she learned that her self-talk was very negative and did not leave much room for success. “I have turned a stumbling block into a stepping stone”, says the PWP enthusiast.

A large part of the program is designed to teach the athletes life skills that will help them along the way. Curiosity also arose around the immediate impact the program had, thus spawned our next survey question which is displayed in exhibit D. *Do you feel that the PWP experience gave you life skills and tools that have had an immediate impact?* The majority of the team, 40% to be exact, chose 8. The main life skills that they claimed to have learned were greater independence, and responsibility. One athlete wrote about how she has learned to seek advice from peers, but not permission. Her outlook on people’s opinion has changed, and she understands that it sometimes might be tainted. One athlete claimed that she is taking more responsibility by being impeccable with her word, saying what she means, and meaning what she says.



Finally we surveyed the desire to participate in the program again (exhibit C). Expectedly 60% chose the highest possible ranking of 10. As a firsthand observer one could see the enjoyment throughout the team, for the majority of the year. Perhaps there are many more aspects of this program from where the athletes benefited that were more difficult to survey. Surprisingly one athlete chose a 5 to rank this category. This was the overall lowest ranking of any category in the entire survey. There was no explanation in the provided space, therefore making it impossible to draw a conclusion.

## Chapter V

### Conclusion

The relevance of lessons in life skills is glaringly obvious and unquestionably necessary in the proper development of student-athletes. The importance of sport in a developing young person's life is beneficial and unique. This would lead one to believe that the combination of the two is a likely way to get valid points across to needy pupils.

By using sport as a metaphor we create an angle on learning that is unavailable to classroom teachers. If desired, coaches can play a huge role in developing student-athlete's life skills. This is why we want to know, will implementing the *Play With Purpose* Curriculum throughout the 00-01 season provide the Lynn University Women's Basketball Team with the necessary tools for personal growth, and the development of a healthy self esteem?

The PWP program attacks an area outside of sports that is difficult to define. We understand that personal growth is when student-athletes develop a sense of personal power to trust themselves through the inevitable changes in life. A healthy self-esteem, for the purposes of this project is defined as a sense of understanding about the benefits of combining body, mind, and spirit principles to achieve maximum results. Gaining concrete, measurable evidence in these expansive areas, either through testing, or performance critiquing is indeed difficult, if not impossible. The best way to gain insight on improvement in these areas is to go directly to the source, the athletes themselves.

Question the ones who knew themselves before and after the treatment, and trust their responses to be honest.

Due to the nature of the treatment, and the small percentage of athletes involved, further research should be done in order to establish a consistent effectiveness. A large majority of the student athletes involved expressed significant changes in their attitudes and behaviors. Many lessons learned through PWP will continue after the season, as well as after the athlete's collegiate career. Long-term effectiveness of the program could also be monitored. A more elaborate approach might incorporate a semi-annual review of the student-athlete's progress. Continued research could follow athletes into adulthood, and possibly into their professional career. This type of research could support the long-term effectiveness the program has. This was also the very first time the program was run. With improved curriculum, and a larger experimental group a wider range of results is bound to surface.

This inaugural program targeted a small group of student-athletes, and catered to their individual needs. Once the program gets larger, and more teams participate the challenge to do so will increase. Once the program branches out and spreads to more sports, a wider geographical, and cultural area will be covered.

We conclude that the program was an overall success. The surveys proved that the student athletes learned about themselves, as well as their teammates. They increased their ability to communicate with each other, and established personal, and team goals.

They have learned to more comfortably deal with change, and their conflict resolution skills were sharpened. The PWP program prepares college athletes for life after sports, and teaches them proper tools necessary to succeed in life. Life lessons in sport may not be the number one reason for participation, but it may be the best.

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## Evaluation

### Exhibit A

1. My favorite part of our Play With Purpose program was:

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2 What I learned most about myself was....

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3. This experience has been ...

1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...10  
Lousy                      Good                      Fab!!!

Why?

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4. The new skill or awareness I can use right now is? Why?

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5. Suggestions for improvement?

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6. Any other questions, comments, issues...

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Food for Thought...

*"Always do your BEST-  
this will gratify some and astonish the rest!"*

M. Twain



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Evaluation**

A) I think/feel that the PWP experience gave me life skills and tools that have had an immediate impact.

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10  
No                      a little                      Yes!!!

Why? How? What? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B) The new skill or awareness I have developed through my Play With Purpose Weekend is:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***This experience:***

C) Helped me do and be my best:

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10  
No                      a little                      Yes!!!

Why? How? What? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

D) Helped me to be a better team player:

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10  
No                      a little                      Yes!!!

Why? How? What? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E) Was worth my time and effort:

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10  
No                      a little                      Yes!!!

Why? How? What? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

F) Was worth the team's time and effort:

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10  
No                      a little                      Yes!!!

Why? How? What? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

G) I would like to experience PWP again:

1....2....3....4....5....6....7....8....9....10  
No                      OK                      Yes!!

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

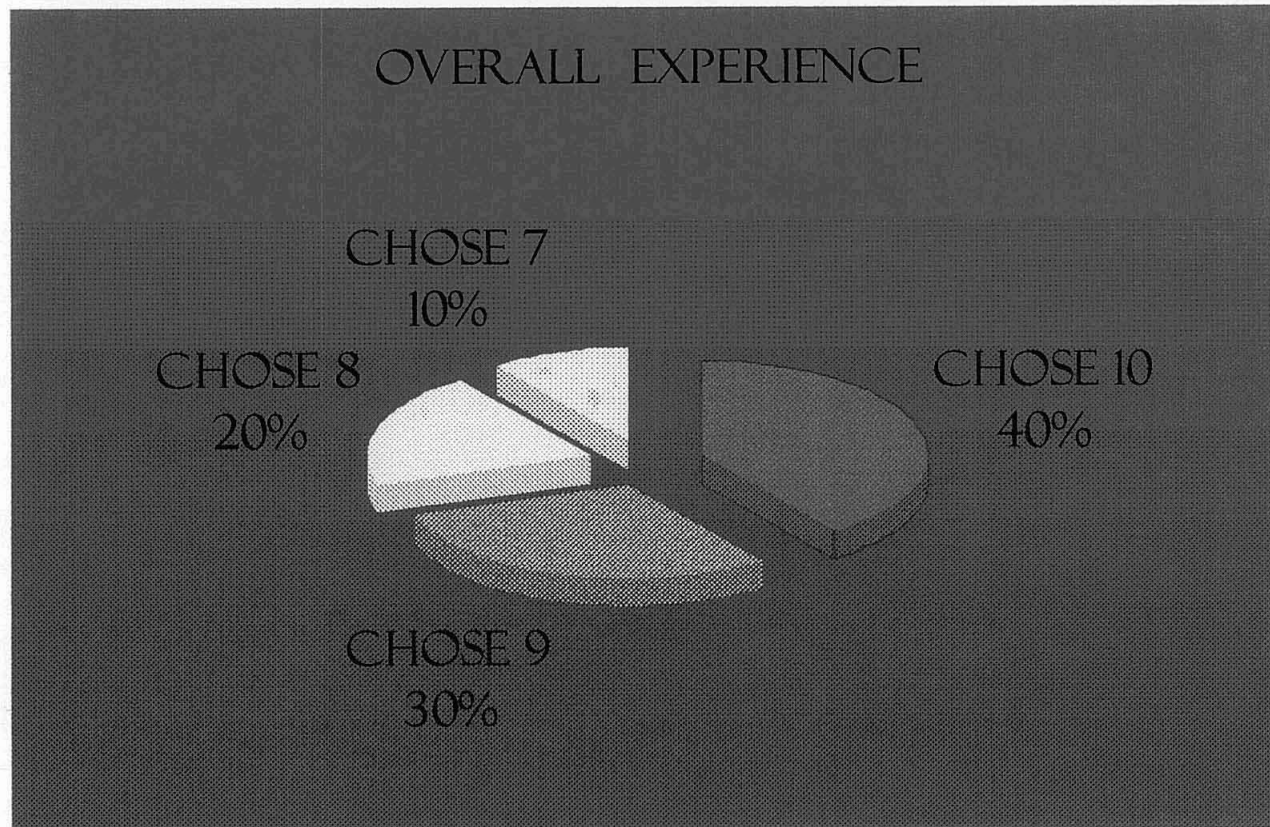
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H) Suggestions, questions, comments, issues...

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Exhibit B

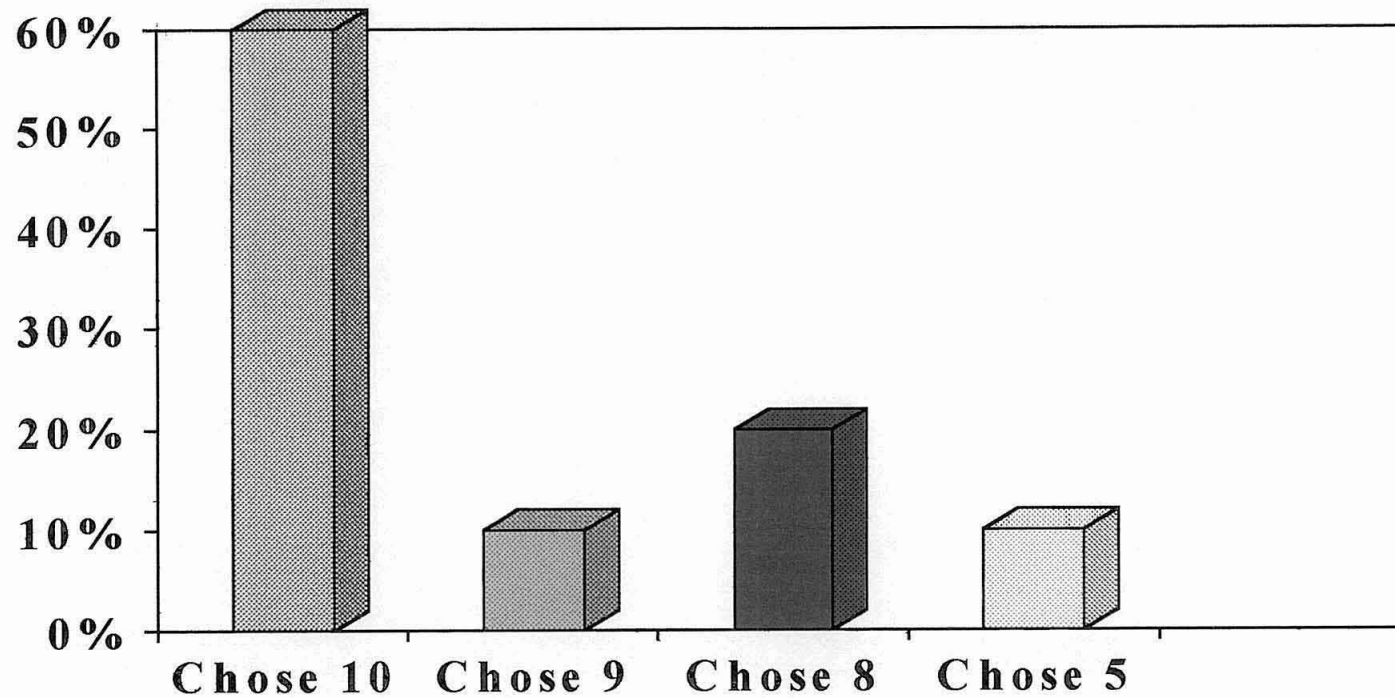


Survey taken on a scale of 1-10, ten being the best



# Exhibit C

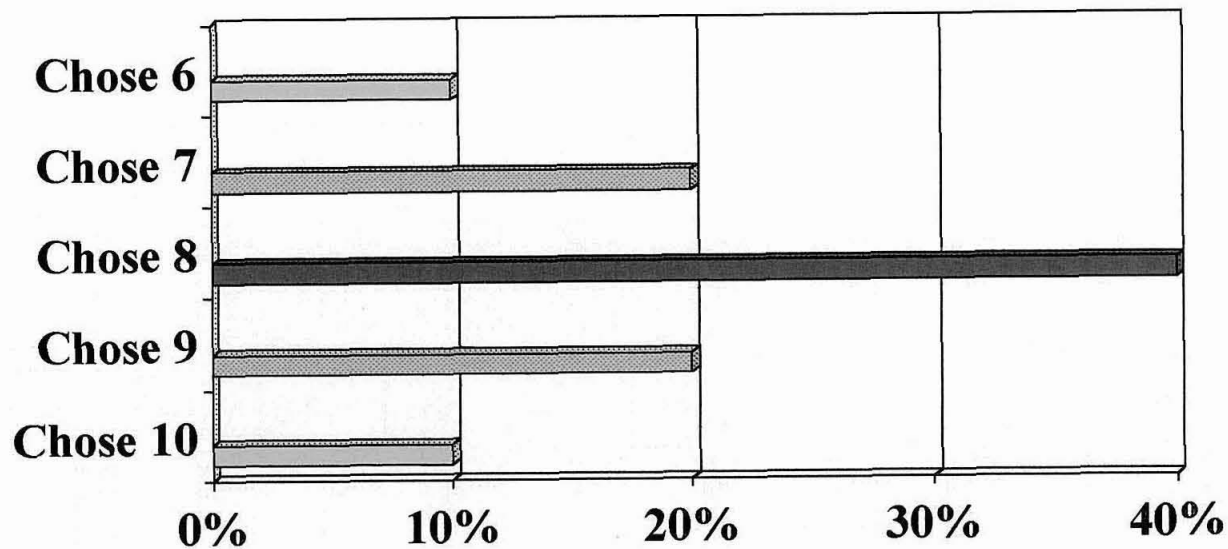
## Willingness to Participate Again



Survey taken on a scale of 1-10, ten being the best.

# Exhibit D

## Immediate Impact of Learned Life Skills



Survey taken on a scale of 1-10, ten being the best.